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THE

CHOLERA, GOD'S SCOURGE

FOR

THE CHASTISEMENT OF THE NATIONS:

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF A FAST OBSERVED IN REFERENCE TO THE APPROACH OF THE EPIDEMIC,

OXFORD, OHIO, AUGUST 16TH, 1833.

BY JOHN W. SCOTT,
Prof. of Nat. Phil. &c. in Miami University.

OXFORD:
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Miami University, *August* 17*th*, 1833.

Dear Sir,

We have been appointed, at a meeting of many of the Students of this Institution, a Committee—to solicit for publication, a copy of the appropriate Discourse delivered by you on Friday the 16th inst. A compliance with this request will oblige

Yours, &c.

Samuel Galloway,
J. G. Monfort,
John H. Miller,
} *Committee.*

Rev. J. W. Scott.

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Oxford, August 19*th*, 1833.

Gentlemen,

The discourse of which you have requested a copy, prepared amidst the press of professional duties, was delivered without any view to publication. I can have no objection to yielding to your request, but what arises from a doubt whether the public may deem the discourse worthy the expense of publication. On this point I submit to your judgment and that of other friends.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Respectfully yours,

J. W. Scott.

Messrs. S. Galloway,
J. G. Monfort,
J. H. Miller.

DISCOURSE.

Amos iii. 6. Last clause. *"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"*

We have assembled, my friends, to day under solemn circumstances, and in presenting ourselves before God in his house for our present professed purpose, we have assumed a very solemn attitude. The Asiatic Cholera, that dreadful scourge which has been for the last sixteen years sweeping over our earth,—that fell destroyer which has already traversed the whole breadth of the Old World, cutting down its fifty millions of the human family in the course of its dark march, and having overleaped the broad Atlantic which it was once vainly hoped would have presented a barrier to arrest its progress, has been for more than a year past committing its deadly ravages in various parts of our own dear country,—has now for several months been lurking upon our immediate border, and threatening to invade us. Every day the danger approaches nearer and nearer, and we know not the day nor the hour when the dark cloud which has so long been impending over us with threatening aspect, may burst upon us with all its horrors. We know not the moment when the destroying angel who has been so long hovering over this place and its vicinity with drawn sword, may receive his commission to strike the blow, and fill every house with the voice of mourning, and every breast with consternation.

Now it does not become us, as a Christian community, under such circumstances to give way to any of those extravagant and overwhelming alarms which betray a want of faith and confidence in God; neither are we to cherish a reckless unconcern when the divine judgments are abroad in the land. Let us rather with a rational and due degree of reverence and fear humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and tremble at his judgments; at the same time that we put ourselves under his protection, where we are as safe as ever we were, no matter what threatening dangers may surround us. Accordingly, my friends, we have set apart this day, and come up hither for this special purpose;—to make confession of our sins, to humble ourselves before God, and to pray him to turn away the apprehended stroke of his wrath from us, and in the midst of deserved wrath to remember undeserved mercy. In attempting, as the organ of this assembly, to suggest a few thoughts in connection with this subject, for the aid and direction of your minds in the exercises of the present hour, I have selected as the basis of my remarks the words of the text. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"

Almost this whole prophecy consists of denunciations of God's judgments. After announcing the threatenings of God against some of the neighbouring wicked nations, the prophet proceeds to turn his voice against Judah, and especially the kingdom of Israel, on account of the idolatry, luxury, pride, injustice, oppression, and other vices and abominations of almost every species, which appear both from this prophet, and his contemporary, the prophet Hosea, to have so greatly prevailed during the time of the then reigning king, Jeroboam the second. In the commencement of this chapter God, by the mouth of his prophet, reproaches that people for their ingratitude, inasmuch as he had distinguished them in a peculiar manner by his favour. Them only had he "known among all the families of the earth." And therefore it was, he informed them, that he would signalize them by the more fierce outpourings of his wrath for their iniquities. In the text God declares to them the source to which all the calamities which should fall upon them were to be traced, and in general the source from which all calamities, especially of a public or special nature, flow. They are not from fate, or chance, but from God. They are strokes either of divine judgment or divine discipline. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" It is unnecessary to labour the point, to prove that it is not moral evil that is here meant. "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." It is natural evil, or in the language of many of the ancient versions, *misfortune*,—*affliction*,—*calamity*, that is intended: and the doctrine of the text is that all calamities, whether of a public or private nature, are direct visitations from God; and as God never does any thing in vain, nor acts without a purpose, are consequently always designed for some special end.

In applying this subject to our present purpose, let us consider a little,

I. The light in which we are to view the present awful calamity which is afflicting the earth.

II. The design for which it has been sent. And then conclude by examining,

III. How we ought to be affected in view of it.

I. In what light are we to view this calamity? We answer,—it has already been answered, that it is a direct and special visitation from God,—a divine judgment upon men on account of their sins. Every pious soul is in the habit of referring all the various events which transpire, whether common or special, prosperous or adverse, to the superintendence of an all-seeing and all-controlling God, by whom the very hairs of our head are numbered, and without whose permission not even a sparrow can fall to the ground. In all the movements of Providence towards himself and others he sees a father's hand; armed it is true at some times with a rod, but always for his good, and the good of those "who love God, and are the called according to his purpose." To such an individual the severe strokes of God's providence are not judgments, but fatherly chastisements, administered by a kind hand; and the worst that can befall him here, can but transfer him to a better world. But such views are not

common to the great world. There are however certain visitations of divine providence so marked in their character, that even the man who is no christian, if he look at the subject with the eye of reason at all, cannot doubt of the fact that they are special judgments from God, and distinct expressions of the divine displeasure against men for their sins. Of this kind is the present scourge. Let us notice a few of the characteristics which mark the nature of this disease, and distinguish it as an evil of no common magnitude,—a visitation of no common character. And

1. *Its novel and mysterious character.* It is an entirely new disease; it only first made its appearance in the summer of 1817. It presents too features of marked peculiarity. Other new diseases it is true have sprung up at different times, but none so terrible, and so mysterious in their character. It confounds the wisdom and skill of the Faculty. They have seen nothing to compare with it,—nothing that puts their medical science so much to a nonplus. Something at first view a little like it had been witnessed in the common Cholera; but when we come to view them in detail, all comparison between the two diseases fails. Physicians are as ignorant of the causes, and nearly as ignorant of the nature and treatment, of the disease as when it first made its appearance among us. A number of theories have been started to account for its origin and mode of propagation, all alike uncertain and unsatisfactory. Its natural history still remains a desideratum. A fearful mystery hangs over its character. It is emphatically in this respect "the pestilence that walketh in darkness," as well as "the destruction that wasteth at noonday." Scarcely any new power has been acquired over the disease by any new modes of treatment. A thousand nostrums have been resorted to, but they have almost all been relinquished by judicious practitioners, for the simple remedy and mode of treatment adopted at an early period in its history.

Other new and peculiar diseases, which have sprung up at an advanced period in the history of the world, such as the small pox, yellow fever, and even the plague, have been found capable of being either anticipated in their attack, or mitigated in their severity, by certain preventives or preparatives; or checked in their march by sanatory restrictions. Not so with the Cholera. Not that I would say all precautionary measures are entirely useless. But no precautions have ever been found sufficient to prevent its approach, or secure from its attack. It has broken over all physical and moral barriers alike, and moved on in its deadly course unobstructed by any sanatory or quarantine regulations. No place and no individual in its course can count upon security. All we can do in such circumstances, is under a sense of our utter powerlessness, to throw ourselves implicitly upon the protection of the God that made us, in whose hand are our life and breath, and whose commissioned minister of destruction the Cholera is.

2. *The steadiness of its advance in its progress over the globe,* is another marked peculiarity of this disease. Ever since its origin its progress has been regularly onward. It took its first rise in Hindostan, in a small town about one hundred miles north east of Calcutta, and early divided itself into two branches. The one took its course eastward through the countries of Farther India, thence northward through China, and finally appeared to spend its force

in the regions of Northern Asia. The other, which is the one that has reached us, made its way westward, at first rather slowly and gradually, until it crossed the boundary between Asia and Europe: since that period it has quickened its pace, and in many instances has literally flown upon the wings of the wind. It is now making its way over our own Continent, and there is no reason to believe it will stop its deadly march till it has made the full circuit of the globe. And then, should it return, as the case of Calcutta, and other places in Asia where it has reappeared almost every year since its origin, and the cases of London and Paris and Cincinnati fearfully forebode; and should it locate itself as a permanent disease on the surface of our globe; what an awful engine of divine wrath it will be, cutting off the human family by wholesale, and as in a moment.

At the same time however that it has shewn this general regularity of advancement in its course, it has exhibited certain apparent caprices,—certain particular irregularities, which seem to point it out still more distinctly as under the immediate controul and guidance of all directing Providence. Had it always kept steadily onward in its course, about at the same rate, and regularly taking every place in its way; the infidel philosopher might have satisfied himself by referring it entirely to the operation of natural causes, acting according to invariable laws. But such has not been the case. Sometimes it seems to have gone round or passed over a place without touching, so that the danger would appear to be entirely past. But again it has retrograded upon it, and fallen with a tenfold fury. Paris is an example. Although as a village therefore we may be safe up to the present hour, while it has been going round us, and is now away past to our west; we have no security, we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. Tomorrow it may fasten upon us in our security, and our citizens and ourselves may be sickening and dying by scores. Surely the exhortation comes to us, in such circumstances, with peculiar emphasis: "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

3. *The extensiveness of its range* is another distinguishing peculiarity of this disease. Other diseases and pestilences of a peculiar character, have been in a measure confined to particular countries, and incident to particular climates, and states of the air. But not so with this. It has, as we have seen, overrun the whole breadth of the old Continent, and appears destined to overrun the whole surface of the globe. Never since the flood has the earth been swept by so universal a scourge. It appears to be limited to no place, to no climate, to no season, to no general state of the atmosphere. It has prevailed alike amid the chilling colds of Siberia, and the burning sands of Arabia;—among the snow-capped mountains of Tartary and Thibet, and on the fertile plains of Hindostan. Onward through countries both barren and fertile, cultivated and uncultivated, civilized and uncivilized, it has been making its deadly march, traversing all lands, rearing its horrid front in every corner of the earth in its course, triumphing over every class of men, and laying its fifty millions low beneath its stroke.

4. *Its marked severity of character* points out this disease as a special and vindictive visitation from God. And this, whether we view it in its effects

upon community at large, or upon the individual sufferer. Wherever it has visited, it has marked its track with desolation. It has swept over, and in some instances almost depopulated some of the fairest portions of our globe. In places visited it has usually taken off from one two hundredth to one tenth of the population. Of those attacked from one third to two thirds generally have died. And in many instances the mortality has been still greater.

And when we come to view it in its effects upon the individual sufferer, nothing can be more appalling. Its attacks are frequently very sudden, its progress always rapid, and its work of death soon accomplished. In Arabia it is said that many died with ten minutes sickness. And Boards of Health in our own country have recommended that each family fix upon two physicians, so that in case of the absence of one, the other may be resorted to; and that a messenger be instantly despatched for medical aid, in case of an attack, as all depends upon the immediate application of the remedy. A few minutes may decide the case. In the language of a certain English physician, this disease begins where all others terminate, in the struggle of death. And the excruciating,—awful agony of the sufferer is such as to render him an object of amazement and terror to all around him. The sight is sufficient to shock and appal humanity, and to unsettle the firmest nerves; and sympathy almost produces the same awful convulsions and contortions of body in the spectators. When we hear of men in health and full blood, and of the most vigorous frames and iron constitutions, being in a few hours or even a few minutes prostrated before the destroyer in weakness and the agonies of death; when we hear physicians, men of the stoutest nerve and inured to scenes of suffering, confess themselves completely unmanned, and thrilled with horror, and declare that the sufferings they have to witness make them almost wish they were not physicians; when we see men flying on all hands from the terrific spectacle, and as though terror and a feeling of self-preservation had frozen the sympathies of the human heart, and the miseries of the one part of the human family had rendered the other callous to the feelings of tenderness,—deaf to the calls of humanity, leaving the suffering victims in many cases to die without aid,—without attention; shall we not say that this is an awful,—an extraordinary,—a special visitation of God's providence!

5. Another feature which marks speciality upon this visitation is *its discriminating character*. It hunts out with extraordinary precision the abodes of vice,—the haunts of intemperance, debauchery, and every moral and physical pollution. This is the report every where. See how the vicious and polluted nations of Asia suffered; and compare the results with the most dire effects of the disease in Europe and America. And see too in countries nominally Christian, the same discriminating character of the disease exhibited. It has been said, and with truth, that the morality of a city or country could almost be inferred from the comparative ravages of the Cholera. Paris suffered more than London, London than Edinburgh. And in our own country the same fact is seen, in its comparative effects upon different cities, and different parts of the same city. I know that this, like every other general rule admits of modifications. I know that a temperate and moral man may sometimes suffer along with the intemperate and immoral. But it is to the general tendencies of the disease I refer; and candour must oblige every one who has looked at

the subject to acknowledge, that the vicious and the intemperate are its proper subjects, and have been its principal victims. Upon them it fixes with its deadliest influence, and by one of this class, if once attacked, scarcely any thing but certain, unavoidable death need be looked for as the result.

Such are a few of the characteristics of the present awful calamity which appear to point it out in a special manner as a direct visitation from heaven; —that go to shew in the sense of the text that there has not been this evil in the world, "and the Lord hath not done it." To this view every pious heart will accord. But the natural heart of man in its infidelity is disposed to object to such a view.

1. It may perhaps be objected, as it has sometimes been, that this disease like all others is dependent on natural causes, and subject to natural laws: and although these causes and laws of action have never yet been satisfactorily ascertained, still why call it a judgment from heaven? Just so said the French infidels: and while the good people of London were humbling themselves under the scourge before God, they jeered them for it, and said that instead of their fasting and praying, they had better set themselves about investigating the causes, nature, and remedy of the disease, or send to France where there were scientific men who could do this. But the tragedy of Paris, when the disease retrograded upon that wicked and abandoned city, shewed with a terrible witness that there is a God in heaven, who at the same time that he regards the prayer of the humble and the penitent, will visit the scoffer with a tremendous retribution.

Now there are two ways in which God has visited nations and men for their iniquities. 1st. By miraculous interpositions of his hand, as in the case of the flood, and a vast number of other cases which might be adduced from Scripture history. And 2nd. By the intervention of natural means,—wars, pestilences, famines, earthquakes, and the like. And this latter has been his most usual way, even under the Old Testament dispensation, when he shewed forth a more distinct exhibition of his immediate superintendence and moral government of the world, and sat as a Ruler and Judge here upon earth.

But the objection is no less unphilosophical than it is infidel in its character. An illustration is afforded by the case of one of these blazing meteors called Comets, which occasionally make their visits, in their long periods, to our Solar system. Every true philosopher looks upon each one of these bodies as having its particular purpose to subserve in keeping up the proper balance of the general system, at the same time that they are borne round by their own proper motions in their grand orbits; so that not one of them could be lost or blotted out of existence without a corresponding derangement of the system. And he sees wisdom and contrivance in the adjustment by which they are each one brought in at the precise juncture of time when its influence is needed. That man would reason as a mere sciolist therefore who should suppose, on ascertaining that these bodies revolve by their own proper forces, and are subject to their regular and stated laws, that they had no great end to answer, by their successive returns, in the general system. Not less unphilosophically does he reason, who supposes that God cannot make use of natural events to subserve a special purpose in the great scheme of his providence, and in his

wise adjustment of his natural to his moral government, bring about the event at the precise point of time when its end is to be answered.

2. Again it may be asked how can this visitation partake of the nature of a divine judgment, seeing it falls upon the good as well as the evil,—the virtuous as well as the vicious,—the temperate as well as the intemperate? And just so it has always been with God's judgments, even under that dispensation when he discriminated more distinctly than he now does between the righteous and the wicked. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled, and their wives and families and all connected with them were swallowed up in one indiscriminate ruin. David sinned in numbering the people, and the whole nation suffered by the pestilence. So closely are the cords of human society intertwined, that it would be impossible humanly speaking, without a miracle, for God to punish the guilty, and the innocent not suffer. Where is the wretch so perfectly insulated,—so cut off from all connection with the rest of the human family, as that he could be punished or removed out of the way without some of these cords being torn or sundered?

But the general tendencies of the disease, and its affinities for intemperance and vice, as has already been noticed, are sufficiently marked to determine its character as the scourge of God for the punishment and cutting off of the wicked. Besides let it be observed that to the good man, should he even be cut off by the Cholera, it is not a punishment, but a happy exchange. That which comes to others as the executioner of God's vengeance, comes to him as a messenger of mercy,—a kind angel to conduct him home to glory.

3. It may still perhaps be asked, how can the Cholera be a judgment upon any particular nation or people for their sins, since it has visited so many nations and of such variety of character? And cannot God chastise varicus nations, and for different sins, at the same time and by the same means! One nation, as well as one community or individual, has one sin, another another, calling down upon each the judgments of heaven; and God who is not limited in his power or means, may chastise them all with the same rod. This leads me to notice a little,

II. The design of God in this visitation. It is a judgment upon men on account of their sins. But what are our particular sins for which he has seen fit to visit us as a people with this sore judgment? I answer, we have sins as a nation, as a church, and as individuals.

1. We have sins as a nation. These,—at least some of them have often been enumerated. That of *Slavery* stands preeminent. This evil has always hung as a dark cloud over our country's glory, and with portentous aspect has threatened our country's prosperity and peace. At least it stands recorded against our nation in the book of God's justice, as a national crime of black injustice. At the same time that we have called our land, a land of liberty, we have been holding a portion of our population in a most degrading and galling servitude. The cry of the poor, injured, oppressed African has gone up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and we have reason to apprehend the doom pronounced against those of old; "Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou

wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee." And with what propriety may we adopt the prayer that follows: "O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble." We have reason, at least, to fear God's frown upon us for this national sin; and see how he has appeared to point it out in the progress and ravages of the Cholera.

Nearly related in point of character for injustice and oppression has been our *treatment of the Aborigines* of our country, especially in the course of policy more recently pursued towards them by the general and some of the State governments. How emphatically in this case have we spoiled, and we were not spoiled; have we dealt treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with us. The rights and the feelings of the poor, defenceless Indian have been considered as nothing, before the cupidity and unrestrained power of the professedly civilized white man. And even the sacred office has not shielded from violence men, who were suspected of not falling in with the oppressive system. The Missionary of the cross has been imprisoned and treated as a common culprit on account of the gospel of Christ. Surely if there is a God in heaven who presides over the nations, such things cannot go unatoned.

Intemperance is another sin emphatically national with us, which ought not to be neglected in the review of this day. This has also been a black stain upon the character of *our* nation in particular. Other nations have stigmatized us as a notoriously drinking community. Now they may not have done us full justice, but candour obliges us to confess that we have given but too much ground for the reproach. Well have we had reason to fear the woe that was pronounced upon the drunkards of Eppraim; that they should be "cast down to the earth," as by "a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, and a flood of mighty waters overflowing." And see too how distinctly God has pointed at this vice in particular in this visitation. There has, it is true, been a noble reform in this particular commenced within a few years past; and it would seem as if God in his kind providence had mercifully so ordered it, that our country might be the better prepared for the visitation, and our population less fit subjects for the scourge than they would otherwise have been.

Party spirit is another of our peculiar national sins. It is not to be expected that in a free country like ours, there will not be differences of opinion and views, and consequently parties. But this liberty of ours has degenerated into downright licentiousness. Things have come to this pass, that no man is deemed fit to take a part in the politics of our country, who is too squeamish to compromise every thing like honesty, integrity, or dignity of character, for the sake of carrying a point in some party intrigue or manœuvre;—no man, however good or honourable, will consent to let himself be brought before the public as a candidate for office, until he has made up his mind to stand out as an object against which a thousand vile hireling presses may open their batteries,—a target at which ten thousand base miscreants may aim their envenomed darts.

I might also mention other national sins. such as *national pride*,—boasting and gasconade about our much abused liberties, as though our own good hand had gained them for us;—forgetting that it was the God of heaven who gave wisdom to our generals, and courage to our armies, and who turned the tide of war, when the Genius of liberty contended with the Demon of oppression on the embattled field. But I pass on, finally on this point, to notice one more sin which I shall denominate,

National Infidelity. I do not here refer merely to that particular form in which this sin has shewn itself, in the disregard of the divine laws exhibited in the enactments of our legislators,—especially that legalized Sabbath breaking for which our nation is noted, in the transportation of the mail, and the running of stages and steamboats on that holy day; nor to the general example of wickedness in high places, in consequence of which in the various lower ranks, "by swearing and lying and killing and stealing" "and other abominable vices, "they break out, and blood toucheth blood," so that "the land mourns." These are but the mere acting out under different forms, of a general principle and system of iniquity. But I refer particularly to that tone of public sentiment, and that view of the nature of our government, which deems it incompatible with the character of an officer of our government, as such to acknowledge himself a christian. As a private citizen he may, if he will, have his religion; but as an officer of the government he must know no religion, and it is more than his popularity is worth, if he do. This is exhibited in every act and movement of our public men. One of our Executives cannot recommend a fast without guarding the language of his proclamation with double care, to have it fairly understood that he merely *permits* the people, if they choose, to meet together to pray and humble themselves before God; lest he should be suspected of some dark design to unite church and State.

It is the boast of the infidel politican that, according to his exposition of the constitution, the religion of the Christian, the Jew, the Mahometan, and the Pagan all stand upon an equal footing,—all have equal privileges in our government; or rather the government recognizes no religion at all. See the celebrated report on sabbath mails presented to the United States Senate a year or two ago. And is it indeed so that all other nations, whether civilized or savage, in a national capacity have some religion and acknowledge some God; but that we present that political anomaly, since the downfall of revolutionary and infidel France, of a nation that has no religion,—owns no God! It is a libel upon our government, and direct rebellion against heaven. And we have reason to look for the judgments of heaven upon us, for the countenance which such opinions receive among us. "Shall not I visit for these things saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

2. We have sins also as a church,—as a professed christian community. Scarcely a single evangelical denomination of christians in our country that is not in an unsettled and divided state, on account of perhaps too great rigidity in non-essentials, and tenacity for old systems on the one hand; a rage for innovation, pretended improvement, and a disregard of church order and church obligations on the other; the vaccillating, temporizing, trimming policy of those who would fain be considered as holding the middle way; and last but

not least, the indecision and imbecility of church courts, by which they have ceased to subserve the purpose for which they where designed, and have left the church to be rent and torn by faction, while nothing is settled or decided, but every thing in uncertainty and suspense. And thus are men going on nominally in the same ecclesiastical connection, one of Paul, and another of Apollos, and another of Cephas ;—would that we could hope all were of Christ. This is too much the case with many of the evangelical churches in our land, and with our own, alas, especially. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon ; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." And far would it have been from me to have touched the unpleasant subject, could I have exonerated myself of my duty to God, and to this congregation, in the review which we are called upon to make of our sins this day.

In consequence of this and other causes on our part, God has been leaving our churches to coldness, and deadness, and barrenness of ordinances.

> "The spirit like a peaceful dove
> Flies from the realms of noise and strife."

"The ways of Zion mourn because few come to the solemn feasts." "Iniquity abounds" and "the love of many waxes cold." Look at the state of the churches in our region, and of our own church in particular for more than a year past. Why this coldness and torpidity on the part of professed christians? Why are sinners not pressing into the kingdom? It is easy for us, my friends, to look around us, and find causes without ourselves. This or that preacher or private christian has not been doing right,—has not been faithful,—has not discharged his duty. But, my friends, it is with our own hearts especially we have each one to do to day ; and every sincere christian will find he has enough to do with his heart before God, without going abroad to look into the character and conduct of his fellow professing christians.

3. What then are the individual sins which each one of us has to remember before God to day? We are not to content ourselves with a vague survey of our sins as a nation or church, but we are to endeavour each one of us to make it a personal thing, and to ask our hearts what are our own particular sins, which go to make up the great aggregate of guilt for which God is visiting our country in wrath. And here the question need not be put amiss, when addressed to the impenitent sinner. His whole heart is a mass of depravity, his whole life a tissue of sin. But, fellow professors of religion, what are *our* particular sins which we are called upon to review? Have we not forgotten our first love? Have we not declined in our religious affections? Have we not cast off fear, and restrained prayer before God? Have we walked worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called? Have we discharged our duty towards our impenitent fellow sinners, and been careful to set a godly example before them? Have we let our light so shine before men that they seeing our good works should be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven? Or, have we gone to the altar of God and there left our vows that we would be for him, and for none else; and then gone away, and by our conduct shewed the world we did not mean this: that we were determined to live for the world,—conformed to

its customs, its maxims, its pursuits, its amusements? Have we been careful to maintain such a tender walk and conversation, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of us? Or have we on the contrary by our conduct given the enemy occasion to blaspheme? Has the cheek of some brother in the church been mantled with the blush of confusion on being pointed to some one of us, and having it cast into his teeth by some man of the world; "there is a member of the church who professes to be very sanctimonious, and yet you see he can cheat and over-reach his neighbour in a bargain, he can get drunk, or there is no confidence to be put in his word; —or there is a member of the church as good as any of you, and yet he is none of your bigoted, narrow minded souls, he can take his glass, or he can engage in some of the light and trifling amusements which the world deems so innocent." Is it so my friends that any of us have thus brought a reproach upon the church? Is it indeed so that the Devil and the world have conspired to praise us for our liberality, and freedom from bigotry? These, my friends, are solemn questions which it becomes us individually to ask our hearts this day; and "if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things."

III. After such a review, how should we be affected, and what is our duty, in view of God's judgments? The case is plain. It becomes us to fast and to humble ourselves before God. But what is it to fast and humble ourselves before God? Is it merely to refrain from bodily labour and abstain from food? Is it merely to put on a sad countenance, and disfigure our faces like the ancient pharisees? Is it merely to appear in the house of God and engage in the external acts of worship? "Is it such a fast that I have chosen;" says God, "a day for a man to afflict his soul, to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, an acceptable day unto the Lord?" No, my friends although these external expressions may be proper enough, yet our humiliation must go farther than this if we would expect it to be acceptable to God. "God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." We must confess our sins before God; we must mourn over them with deep, heartfelt sorrow: we must loathe and abhor them, and ourselves on account of them; and we must repent as in dust and ashes, and shew the sincerity of our repentance by forming and putting into execution new resolutions of amendment and obedience.

If we thus humble ourselves and repent of our sins as a nation, as a church, and especially as individuals, who can tell whether the Lord may not peradventure yet hear, and forgive, and spare our place. He has given us in the case of David, of Hezekiah, of the inhabitants of Nineveh, and a thousand other instances both in scripture and later history, abundant evidence that he is true to his promise that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive our sins," as well as to "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Let us also come before him with thanksgiving that our place is yet unharmed; that although the angel of death has been so long threatening it with drawn sword, the stroke has not yet descended. Who would have calculated from our constant and increased intercourse with our neighbouring city, and other parts of the infected region, that our village should have yet been safe from even an imported case of this disease? Truly it is of the Lord's mercies we have been spared.

If we thus come before the Lord with sincere humility and thanksgiving; whether we may be ultimately spared from the scourge or not, we shall find in our own souls that this day has not been unprofitably spent. But if we should not keep it in a proper manner, and with proper feelings and views, it will be worse for us than if we had not pretended to fast. We shall but lull our own consciences, and render ourselves the more ripe for God's judgments. We shall be left to complain with the Jews of old, "we have fasted and thou seeest not; wherefore have we afflicted our soul and thou takest no knowledge?" God shall say to us as he did to them; "Who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to me; your new moons and sabbaths and calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting."

And at the same time that we pray, we must also use means. Prayer without the use of the means is presumption, not trust in God. Let us use all precautionary measures to prevent the approach of the disease, or to mitigate its severity upon ourselves and others. Let us remove all nuisances. And here I would remark that every tippling house, and place of dissipation and debauchery, and every drunkard that reels in our streets is a nuisance, where the disease may find a lodgement, and whence it may emanate and spread. Let us use no nostrums; let us employ no quacks. Let us attend only to the prescriptions of regularly educated physicians. The man who takes a quack into his house, assumes a fearful reponsibility. The blood of his wife, and children, and domestics may lie in his skirts. And let us thus in the use of the means, commit our case to God.

To conclude; there is one thought that ought to hang heavy upon the heart of every christian this day. It is that of the case of the impenitent souls among us who may be cut down in their sins, should the Cholera visit us. O, the incalculable amount of misery and woe that has resulted from the cutting down of even the thousands that have fallen since the disease has reached our own shores,—the great majority of them it is to be feared in an unprepared state. Eternity alone will unfold it. And what christian heart does not tremble for the result to some impenitent relation or neighbonr should we be visited by the scourge. Bear them on your heart, my christian friends, to a throne of grace this day.

And let every impenitent soul be exhorted to prepare for death while mercy still waits. "Prepare," O sinner, "to meet thy God." And then you will have that feeling of security, which even in a medical point of view is deemed so important in this disease especially. He that has thus made "the Lord his refuge; even the Most High his habitation, shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." When the shafts of death are flying thick around him, and a thousand are falling at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand, he shall possess—his soul in security and peace. And if he die it will be but a happy exchange.

But O, the dreadful,—dreadful condition of that poor, wretched, dying sinner who has all his preparation to make for death when writhing in its agonies, and that by a disease that does its execution with such fearful rapidity. The whole course of a life of sin to be reviewed, and but a few hours, perhaps but a few minutes, to do it. O, what a vision of horror rises up before him.

Nothing in the retrospect but the ghost of murdered time. Nothing in the prospect but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment,"—a long eternity of woe. Nothing around to give comfort or support. Weeping friends and sympathizing neighbours must all stand off at a distance, and the expiring man alone and single handed must grapple with the grim monster, while the frightened

> "frantic soul
> Raves through the walls of its clay tenement,
> Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
> But shrieks in vain.
> The foe
> Like a staunch murderer steady to his purpose,
> Pursues her close through every lane of life,
> Nor misses once the track: but presses on,
> 'Till forced at last to the tremendous verge,
> She sinks at once to everlasting ruin."

Let us then, saint and sinner, all humble ourselves before God, and pray him to avert the scourge from us, or prepare us for it.

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